DANIEL WARREN JOHNSON JORGE CORONA MIKE SPICER

TRANSFORMERS

image

#07

ENERGON UNIVERSE

TRANSFORMERS

ISSUE SEVEN

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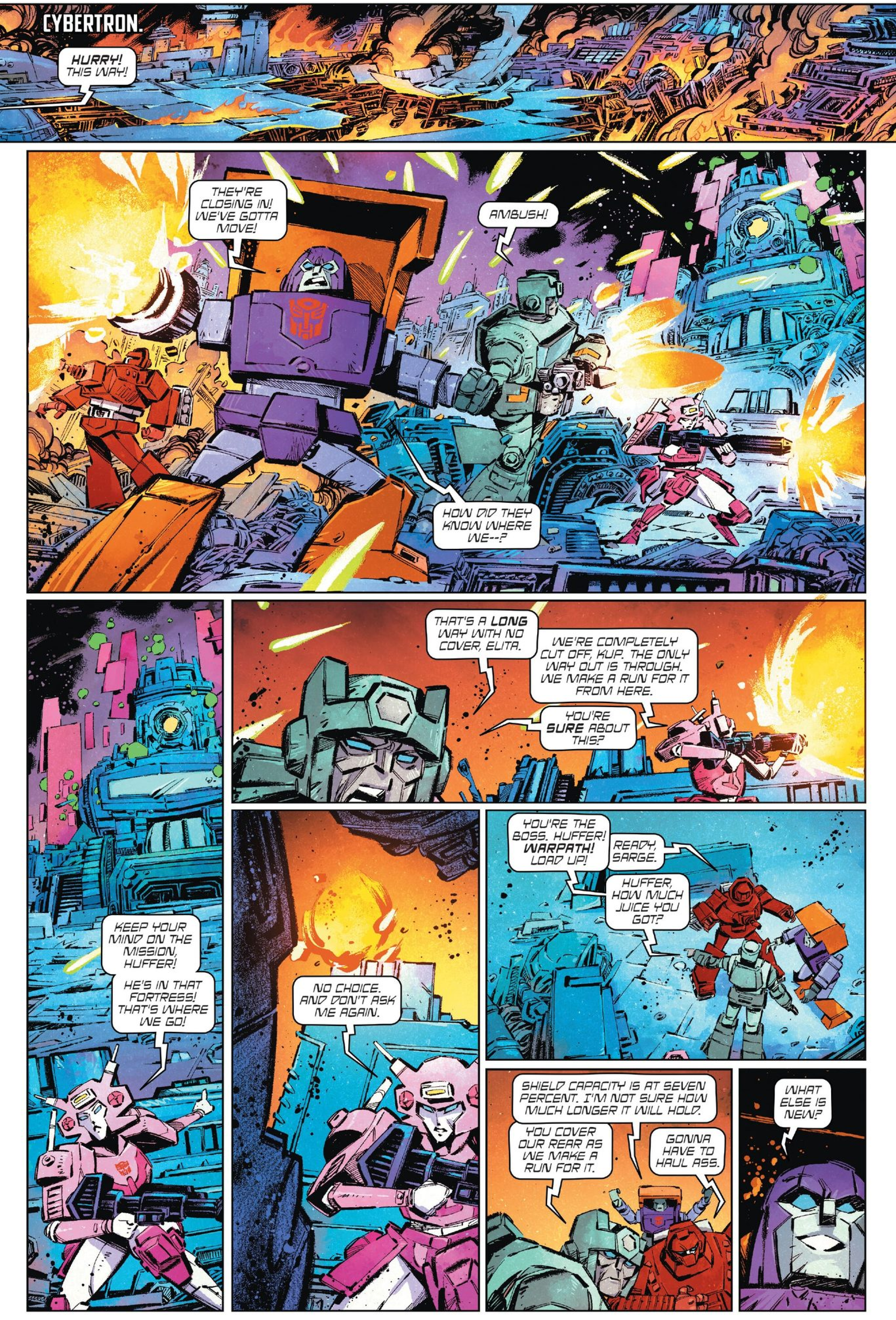
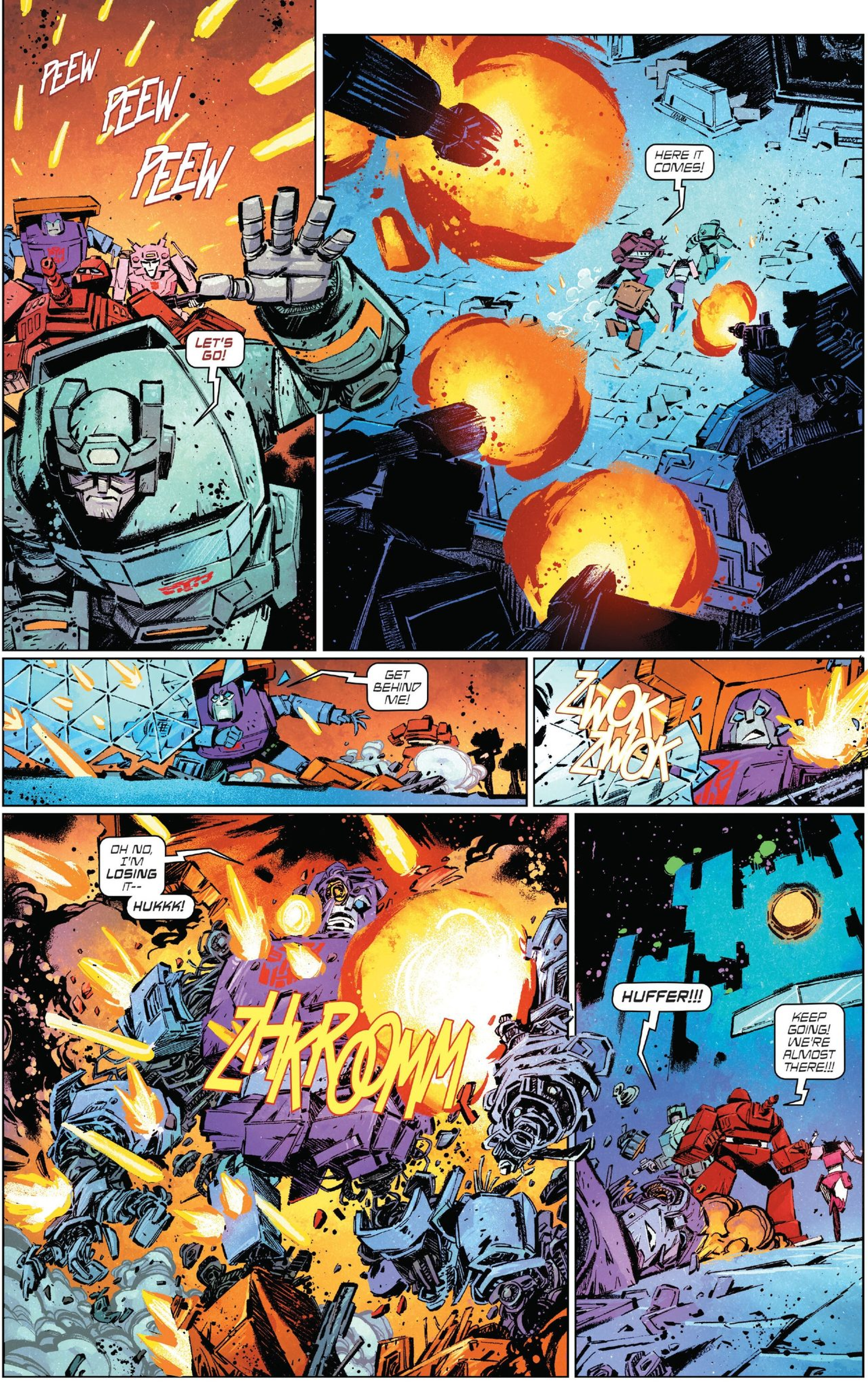
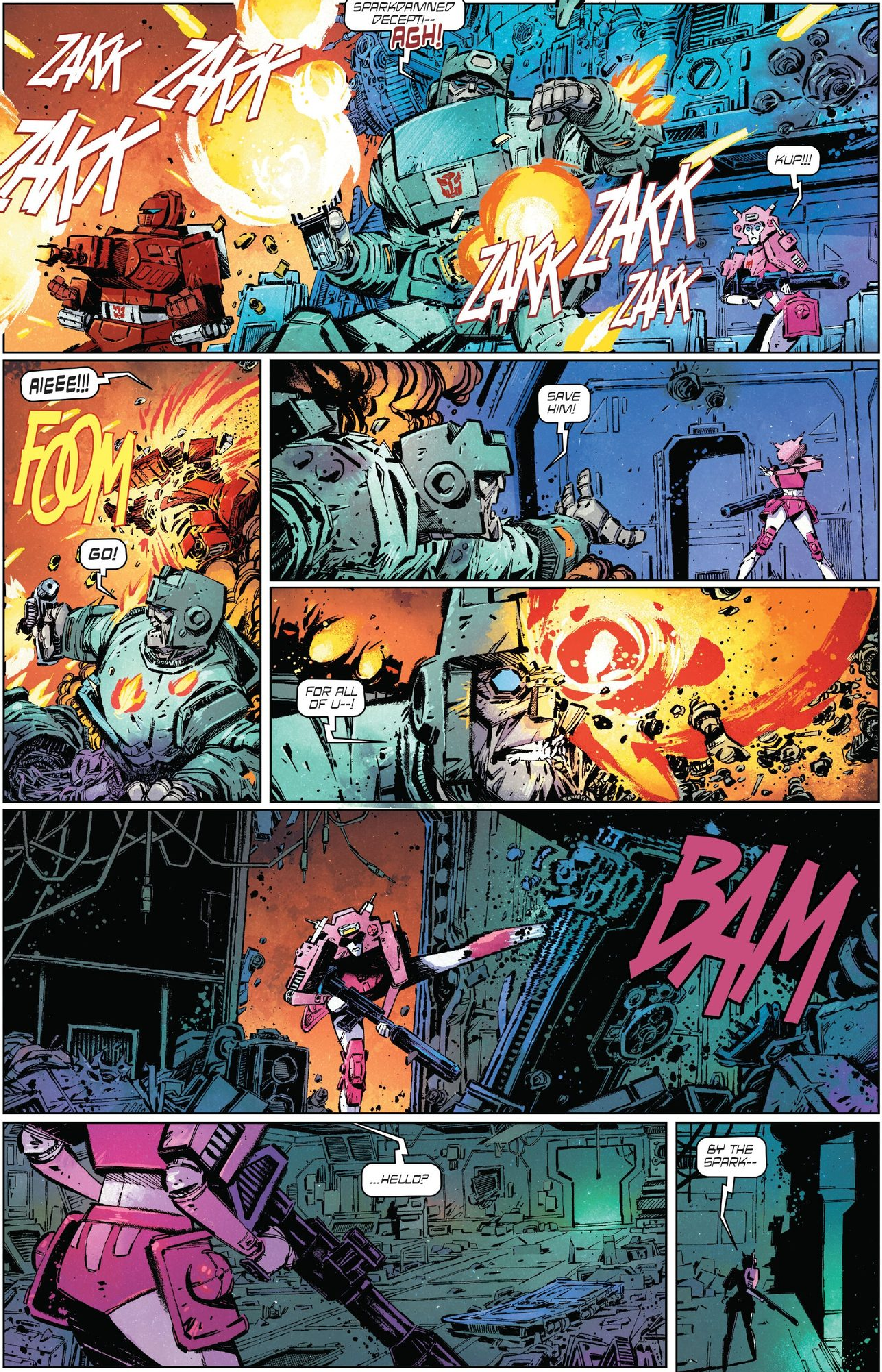
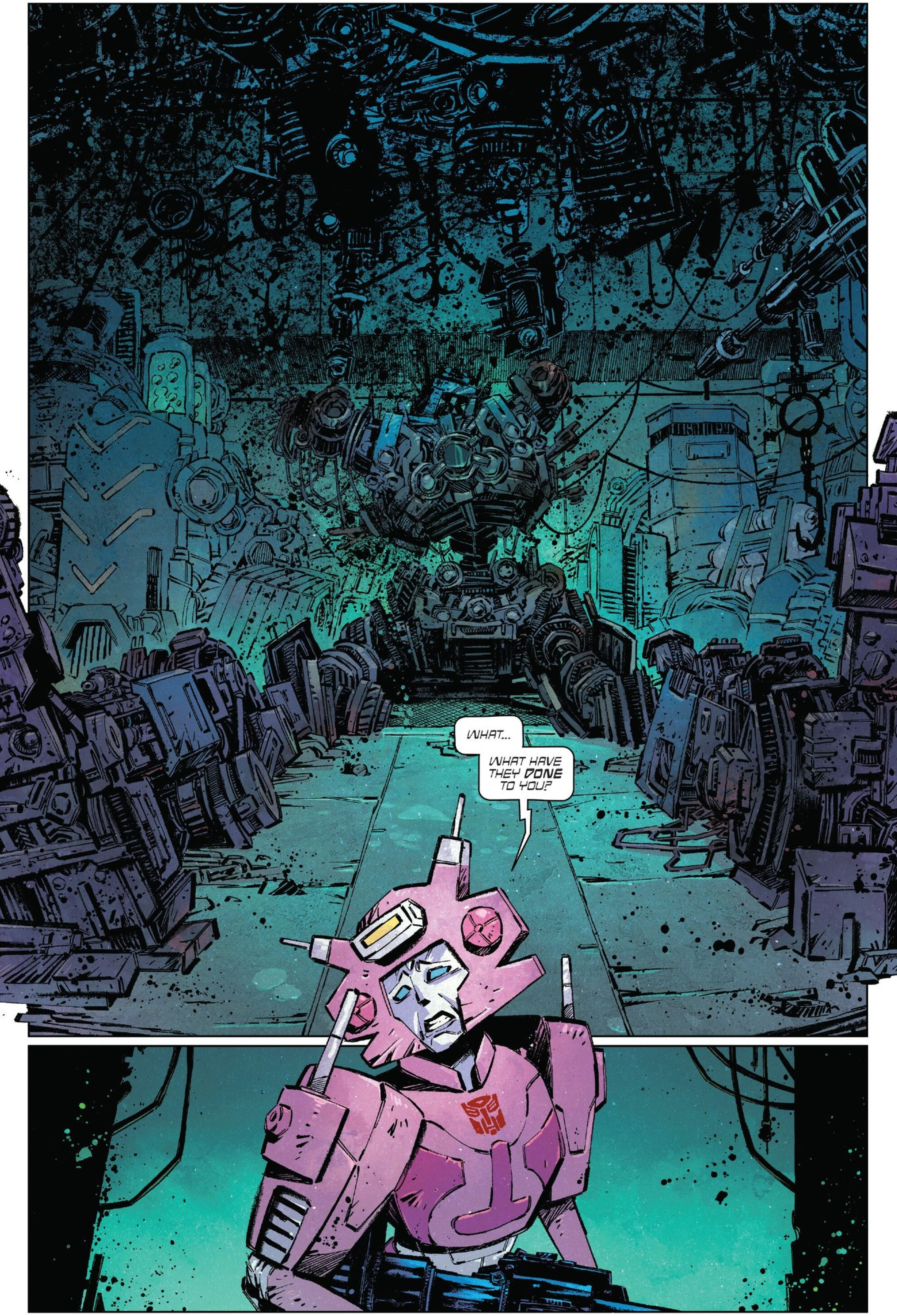
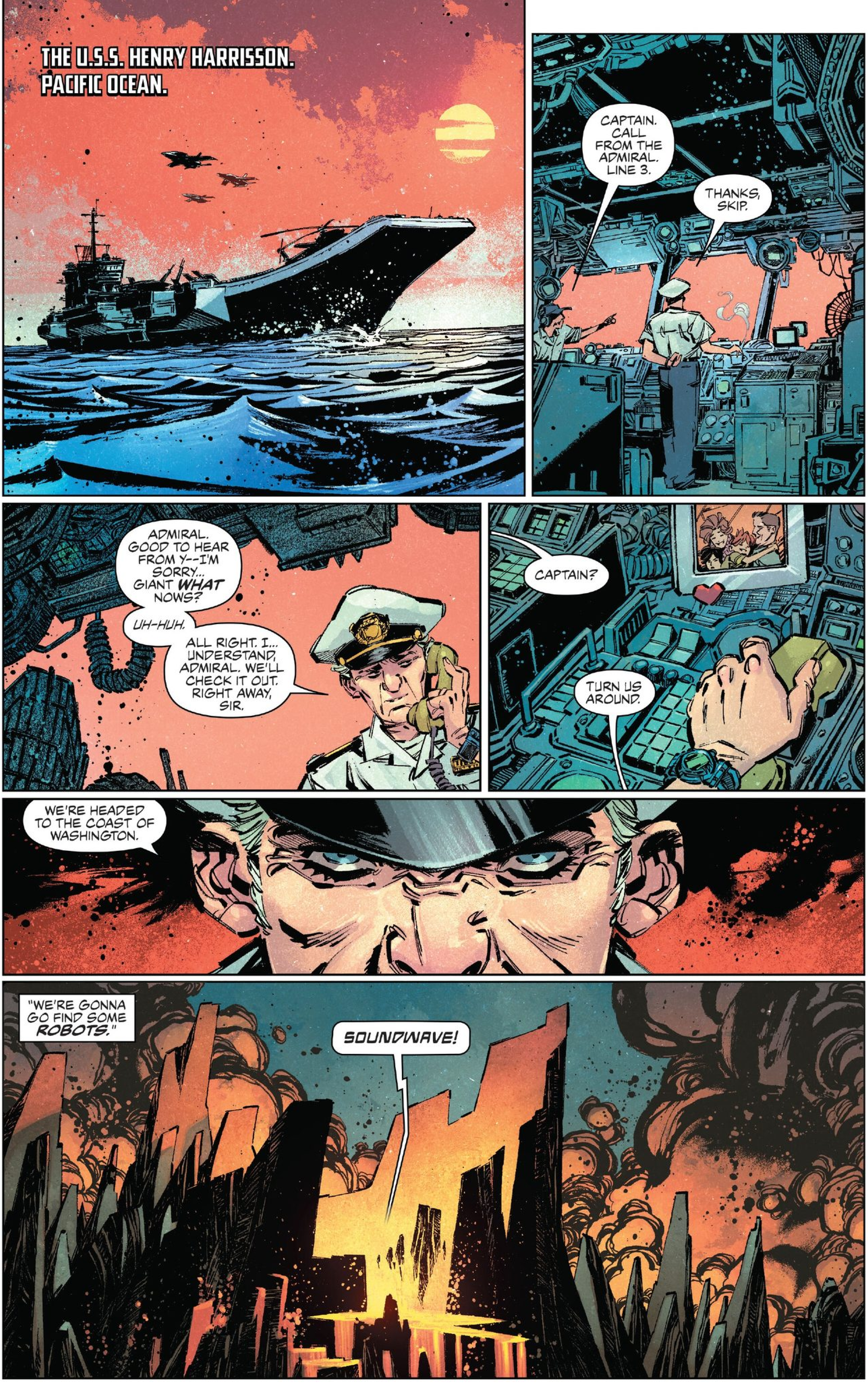
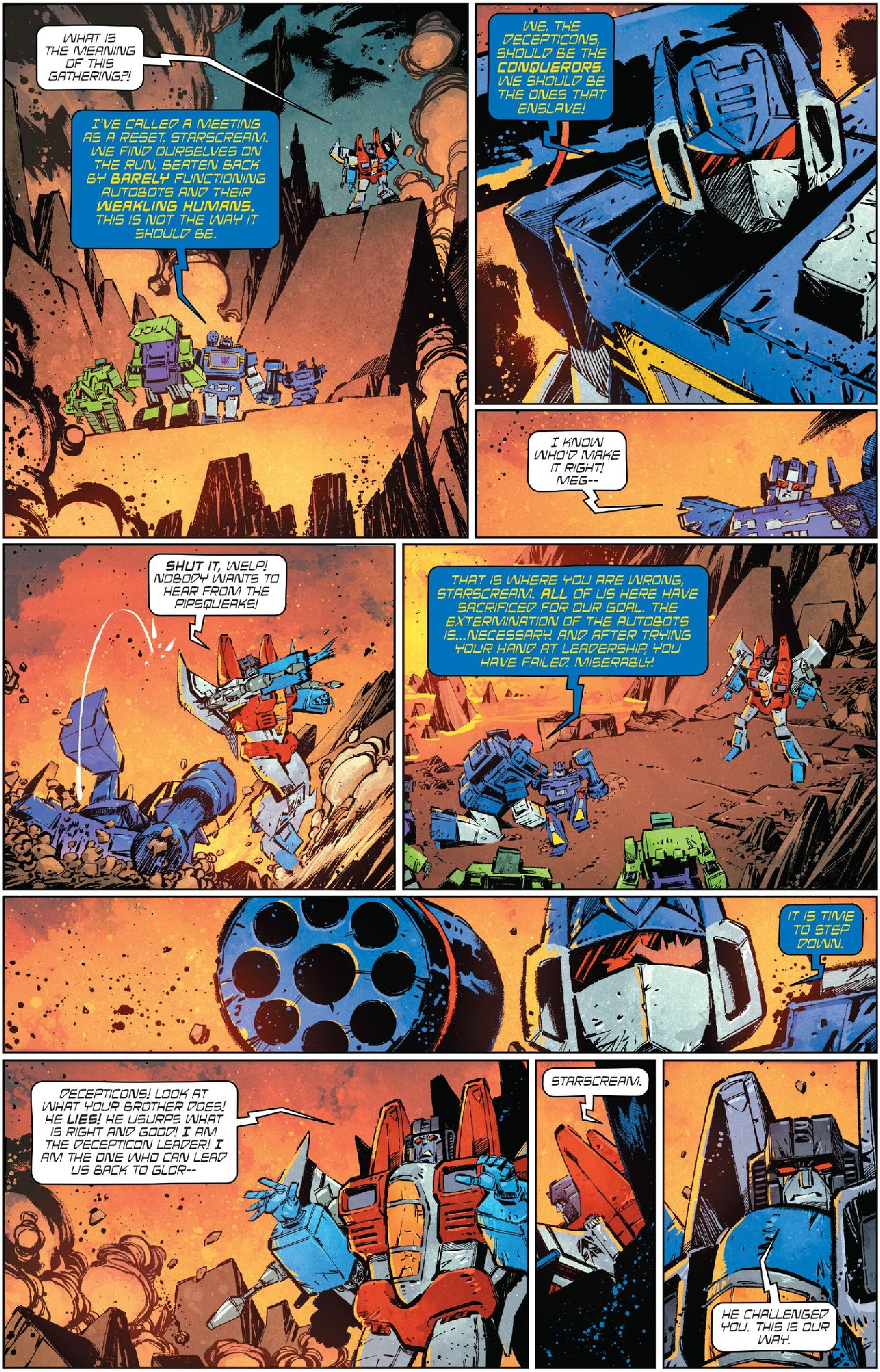

CYBERTRON.
HURRY! THIS WAY!
THEY'RE CLOSING IN! WE'VE GOTTA MOVE!
AMBUSH!
HOW DID THEY KNOW WHERE WE--?
KEEP YOUR MIND ON THE MISSION, HUFFER!
HE'S IN THAT FORTRESS! THAT'S WHERE WE GO!
THAT'S A **LONG** WAY WITH NO COVER, ELITA.
WE'RE COMPLETELY CUT OFF, KUP. THE ONLY WAY OUT IS THROUGH. WE MAKE A RUN FOR IT FROM HERE.
YOU'RE **SURE** ABOUT THIS?
NO CHOICE. AND DON'T ASK ME AGAIN.
YOU'RE THE BOSS. HUFFER! **WARPATH!** LOAD UP!
READY, SARGE.
HUFFER, HOW MUCH JUICE YOU GOT?
SHIELD CAPACITY IS AT SEVEN PERCENT. I'M NOT SURE HOW MUCH LONGER IT WILL HOLD.
YOU COVER OUR REAR AS WE MAKE A RUN FOR IT.
GONNA HAVE TO HAUL ASS.
WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

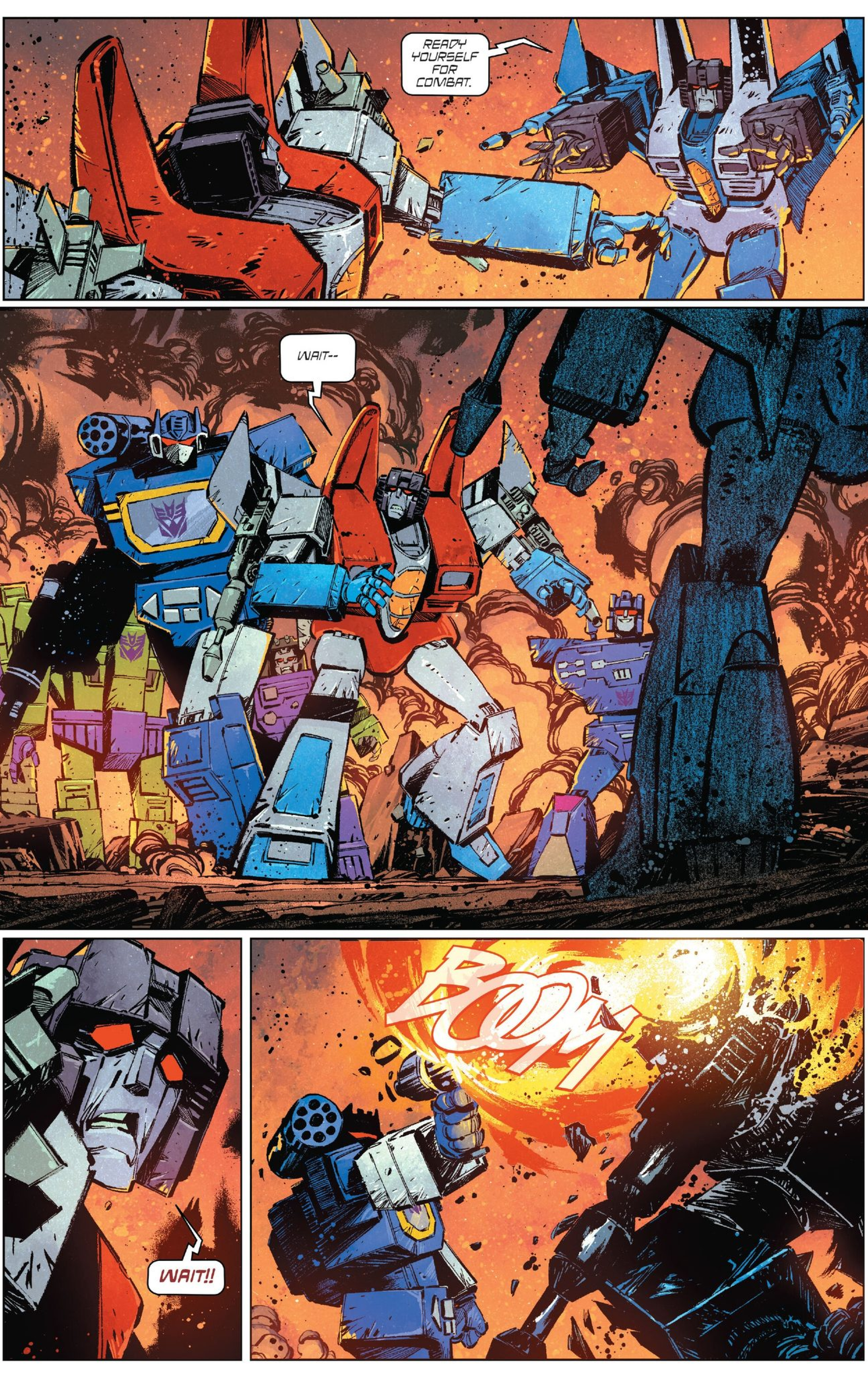

PEEW
PEEW
PEEW
LET'S GO!
HERE IT COMES!
GET BEHIND ME!
ZWOK
ZWOK
OH NO, I'M LOSING IT--
HUKKK!
ZHKROOMM
HUFFER!!!
KEEP GOING! WE'RE ALMOST THERE!!!

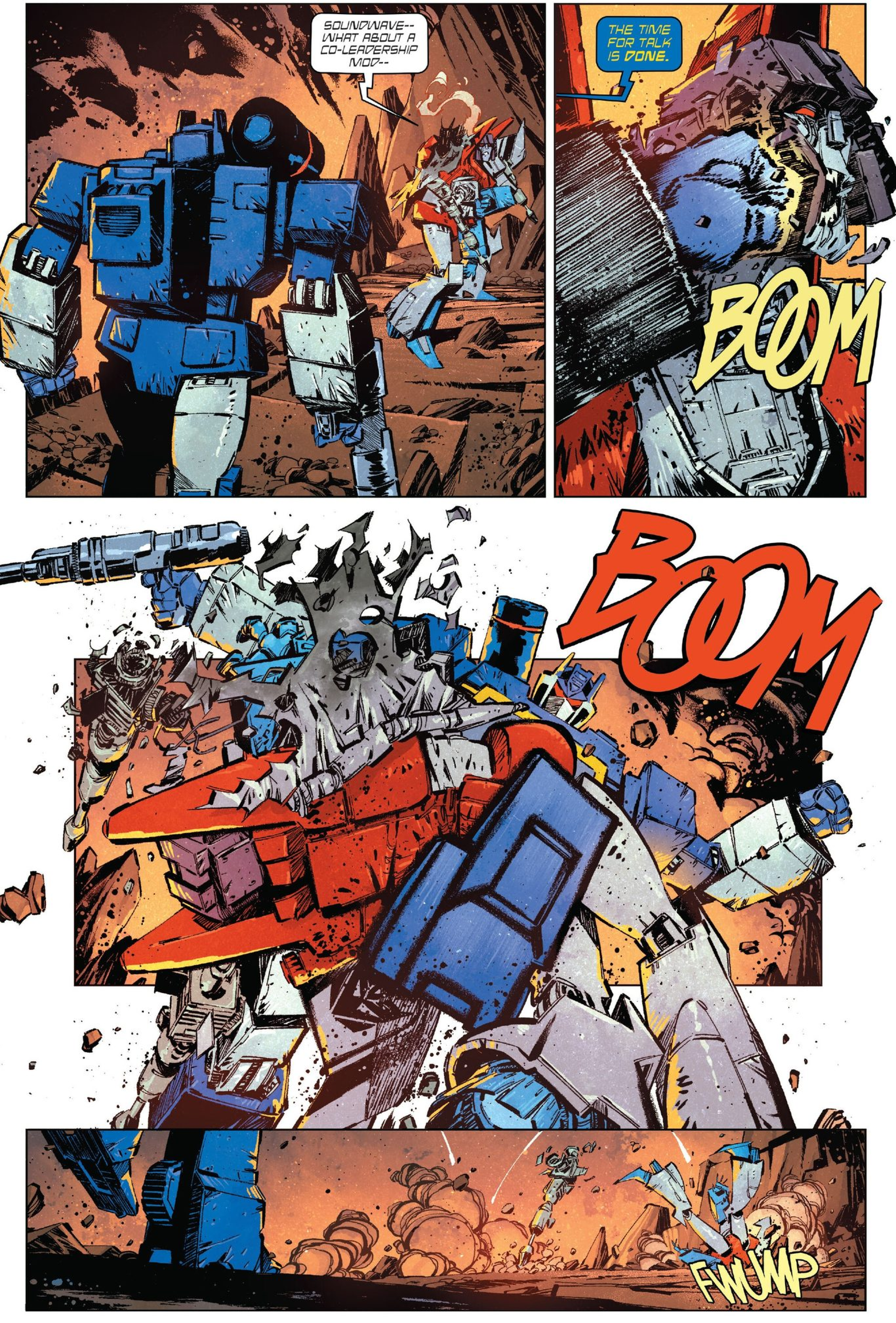

ZAKK
ZAKK
ZAKK
SPARKDAMNED DECEPTI-- AGH!
ZAKK
ZAKK
ZAKK
KUP!!!
AIEEE!!!
FOOM
GO!
SAVE HIM!
FOR ALL OF U--!
BAM
...HELLO?
BY THE SPARK--

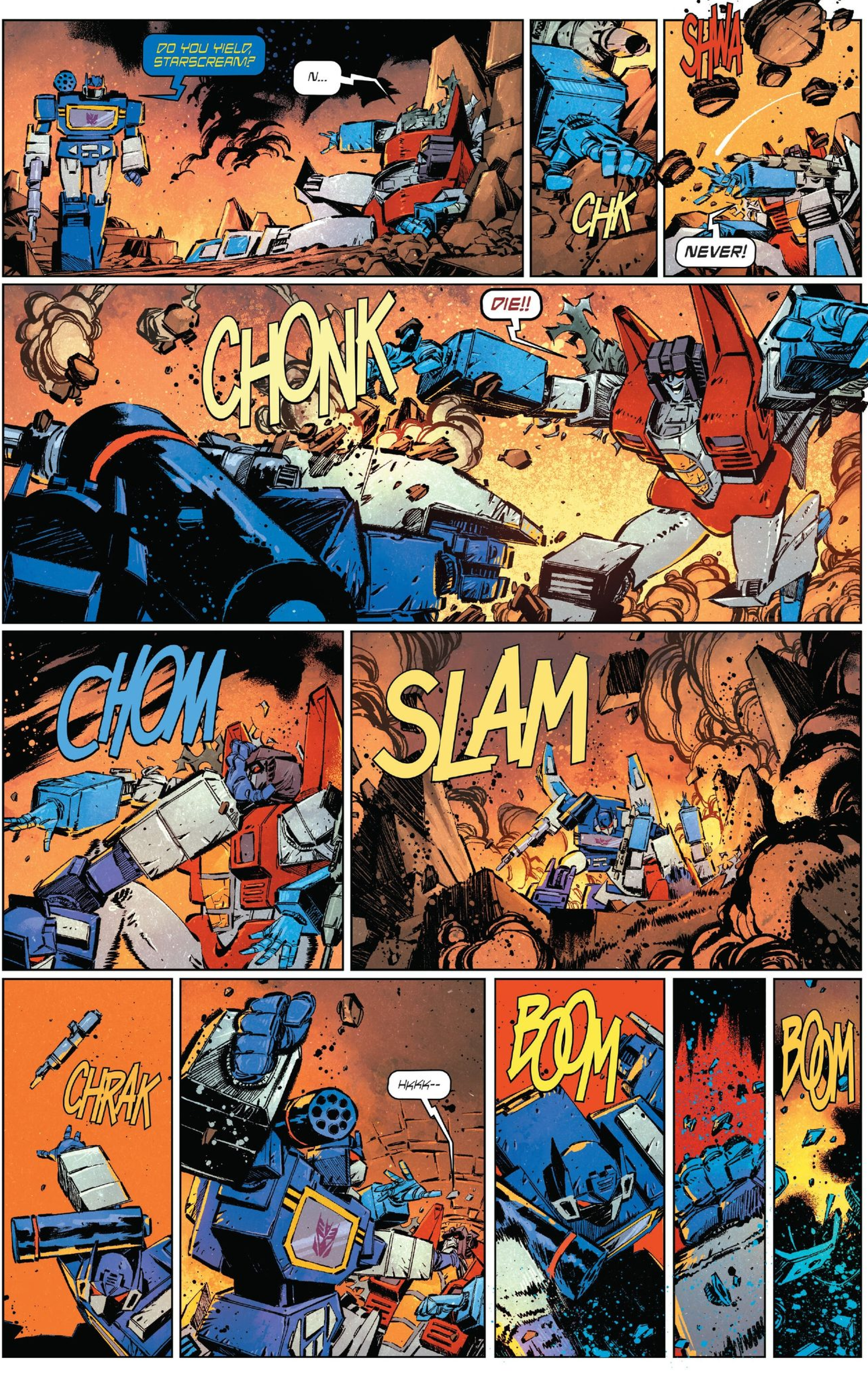

WHAT... WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO YOU?

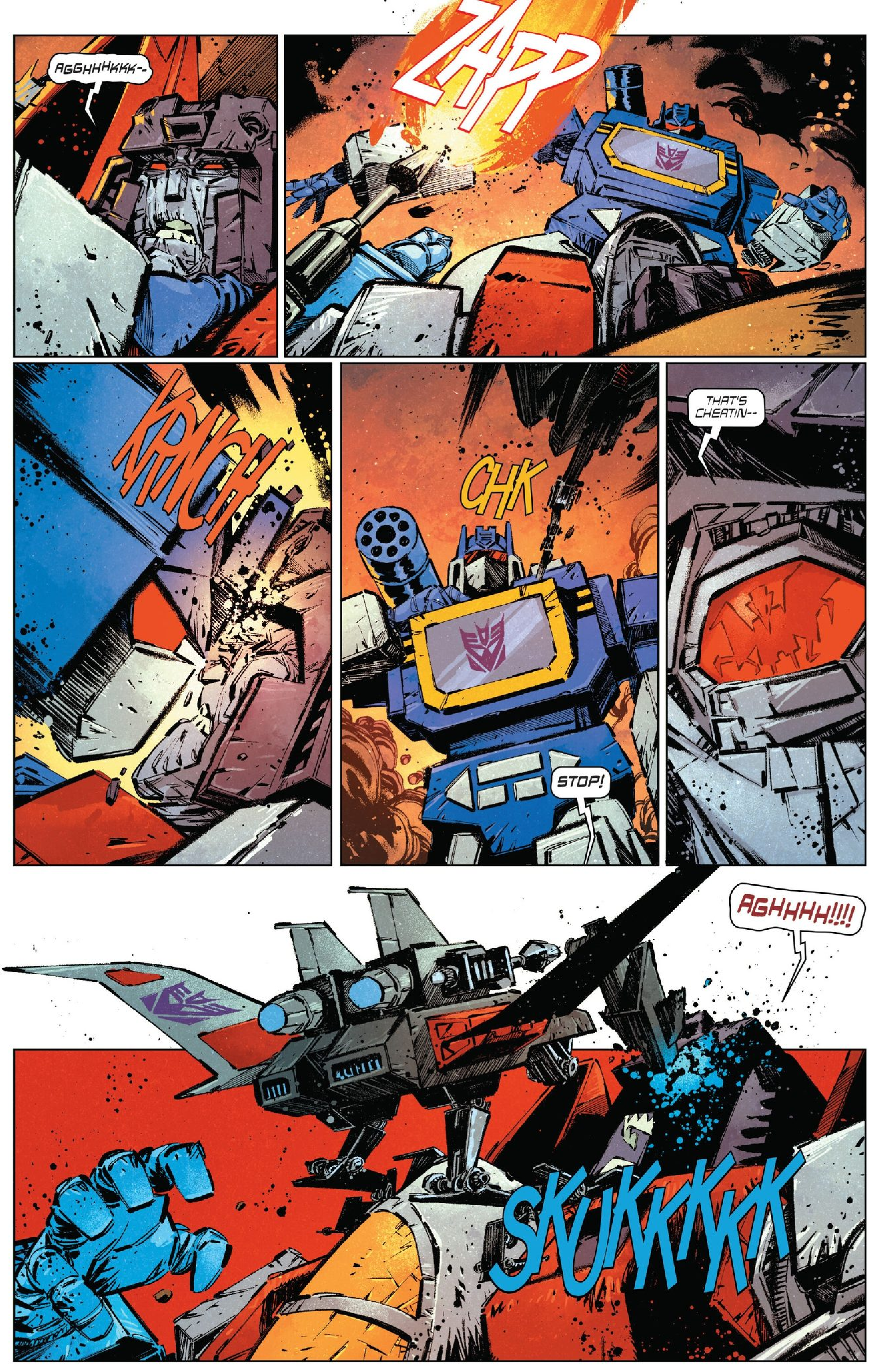

THE U.S.S. HENRY HARRISSON. PACIFIC OCEAN.
CAPTAIN. CALL FROM THE ADMIRAL. LINE 3.
THANKS, SKIP.
ADMIRAL. GOOD TO HEAR FROM Y--I'M SORRY... GIANT *WHAT* NOWS?
UH-HUH.
ALL RIGHT. I... UNDERSTAND, ADMIRAL. WE'LL CHECK IT OUT. RIGHT AWAY, SIR.
CAPTAIN?
TURN US AROUND.
WE'RE HEADED TO THE COAST OF WASHINGTON.
"WE'RE GONNA GO FIND SOME *ROBOTS.*"
SOUNDWAVE!

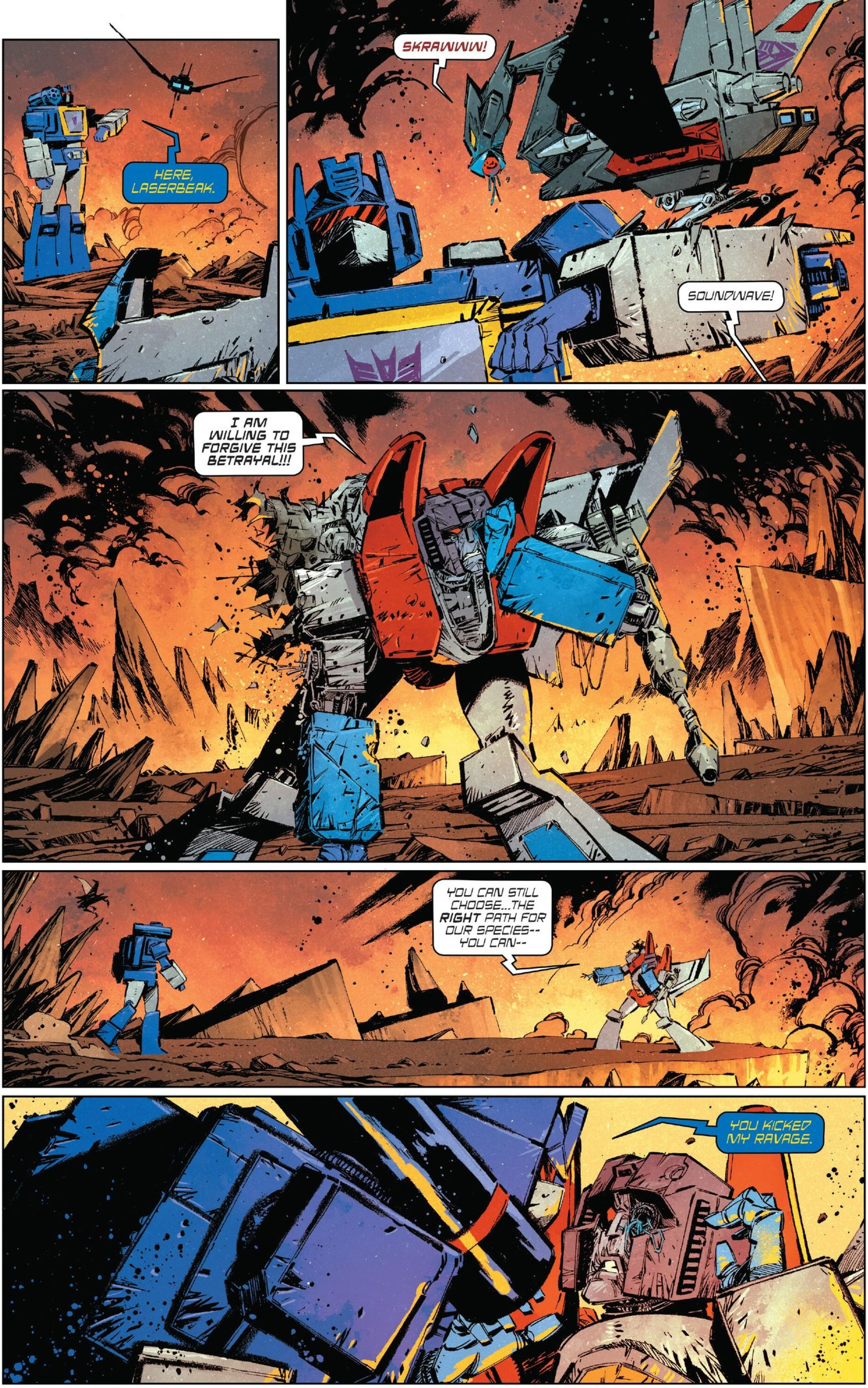

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS GATHERING?!
I'VE CALLED A MEETING AS A RESET, STARSCREAM. WE FIND OURSELVES ON THE RUN, BEATEN BACK BY **BARELY** FUNCTIONING AUTOBOTS AND THEIR **WEAKLING HUMANS.** THIS IS NOT THE WAY IT SHOULD BE.
WE, THE DECEPTICONS, SHOULD BE THE **CONQUERORS.** WE SHOULD BE THE ONES THAT ENSLAVE!
I KNOW WHO'D MAKE IT RIGHT! MEG--
SHUT IT, WELP! NOBODY WANTS TO HEAR FROM THE PIPSQUEAKS!
THAT IS WHERE YOU ARE WRONG, STARSCREAM. **ALL** OF US HERE HAVE SACRIFICED FOR OUR GOAL. THE EXTERMINATION OF THE AUTOBOTS IS...NECESSARY. AND AFTER TRYING YOUR HAND AT LEADERSHIP, YOU HAVE FAILED. MISERABLY.
IT IS TIME TO STEP DOWN.
DECEPTICONS! LOOK AT WHAT YOUR BROTHER DOES! HE **LIES!** HE USURPS WHAT IS RIGHT AND GOOD! **I** AM THE DECEPTICON LEADER! **I** AM THE ONE WHO CAN LEAD US BACK TO GLOR--
STARSCREAM.
HE CHALLENGED YOU. THIS IS OUR WAY.

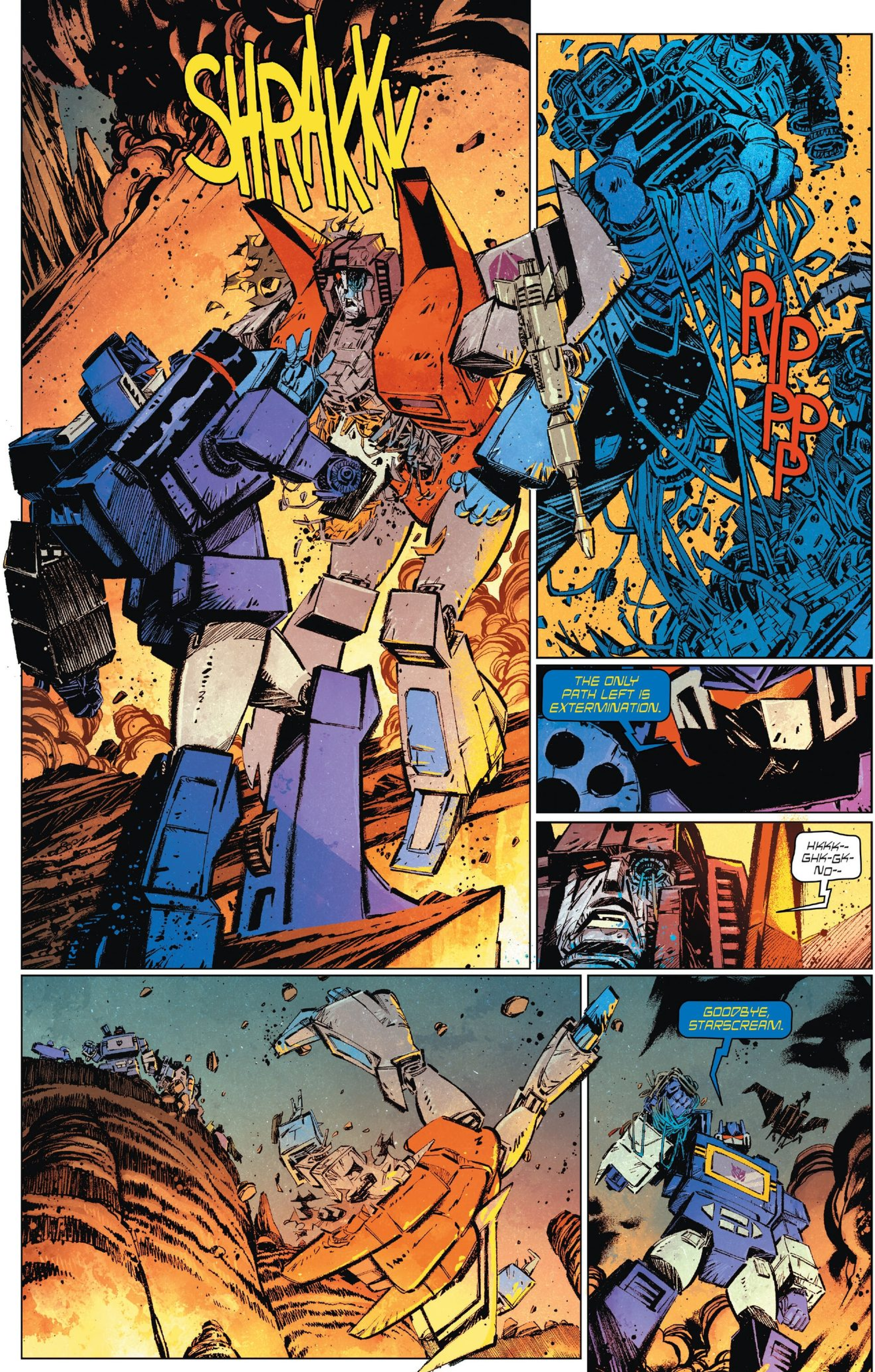

READY YOURSELF FOR COMBAT.
WAIT--
WAIT!!
BOOM

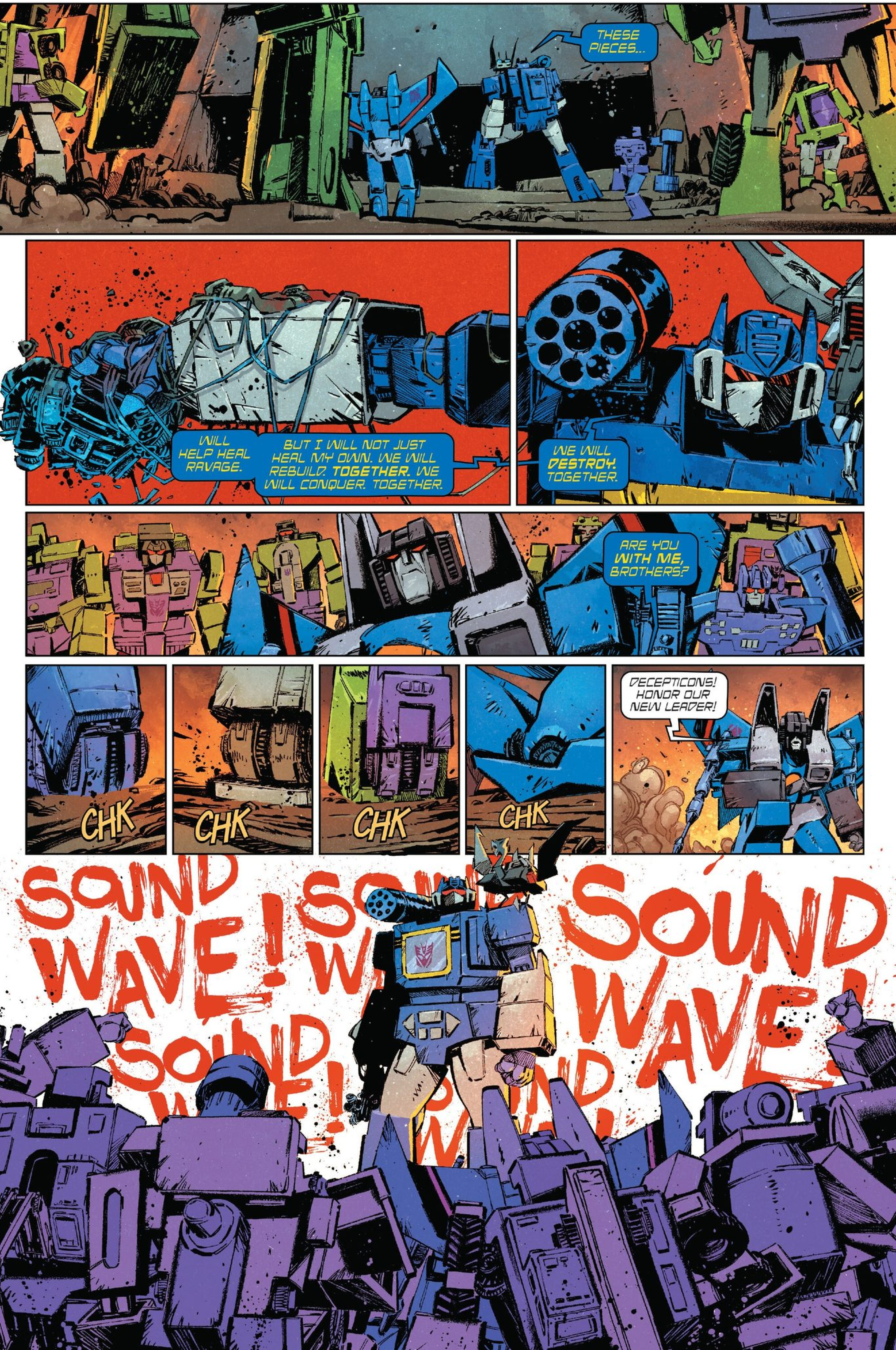

SOUNDWAVE-- WHAT ABOUT A CO-LEADERSHIP MOD--
THE TIME FOR TALK IS **DONE.**
BOOM
BOOM
FWUMP

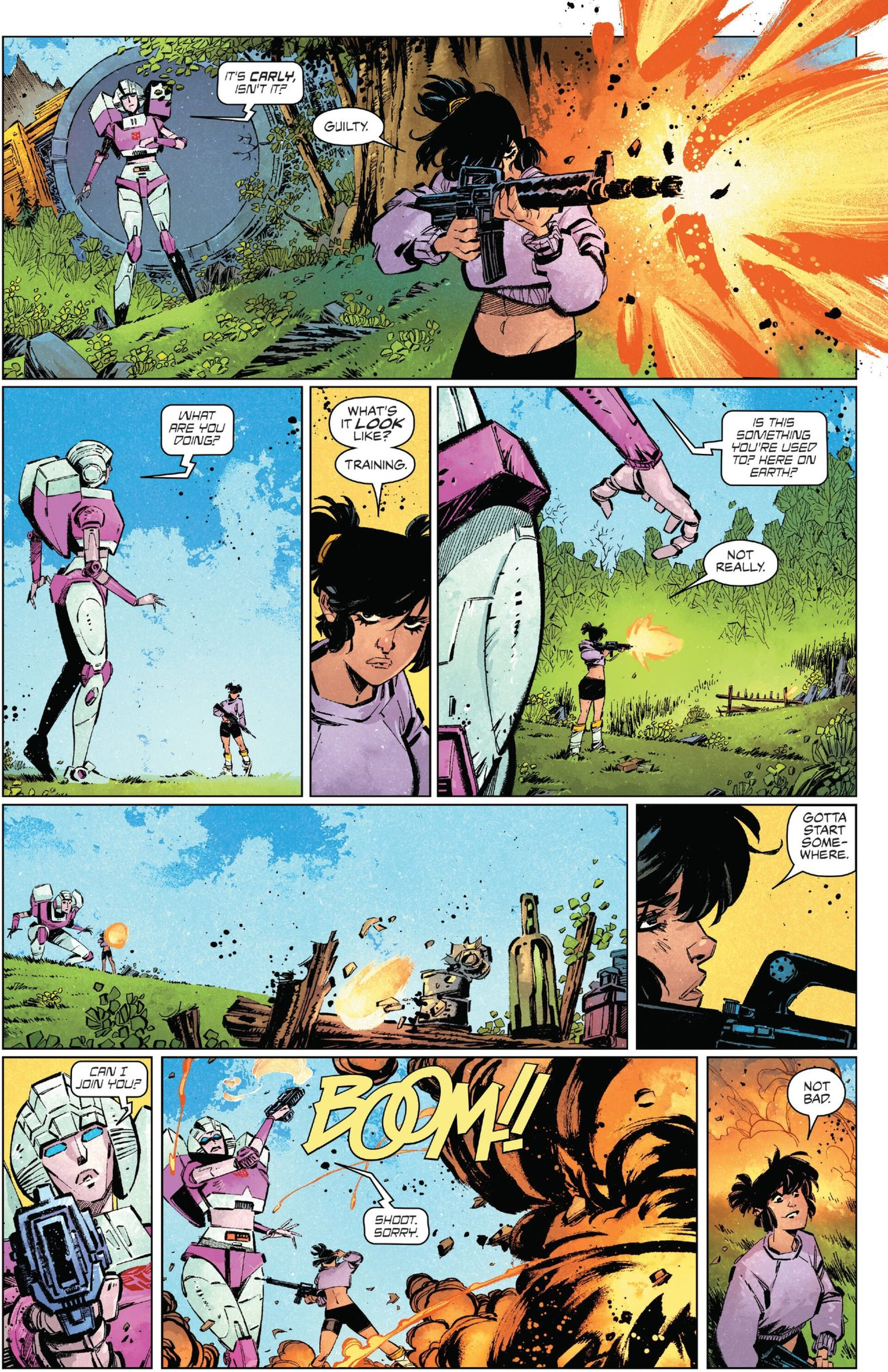

DO YOU YIELD, STARSCREAM?
N...
CHK
SHWA
NEVER!
CHONK
DIE!!
CHOM
SLAM
CHRAK
HKKK--
BOOM
BOOM

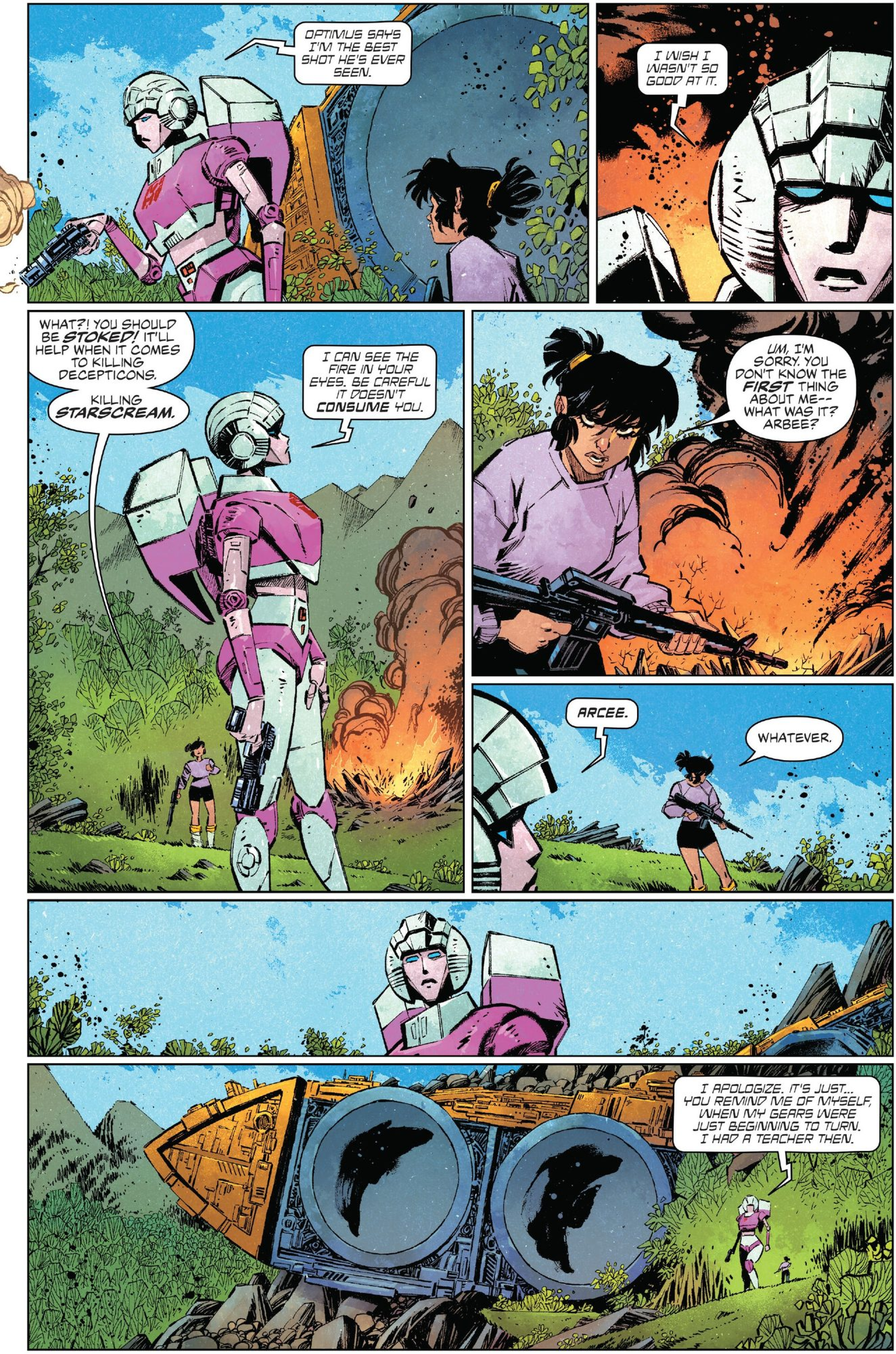

AGGHHHKKK--
ZAPP
KRNCH
CHK
STOP!
THAT'S CHEATIN--
AGHHHH!!!!
SKUKKKK

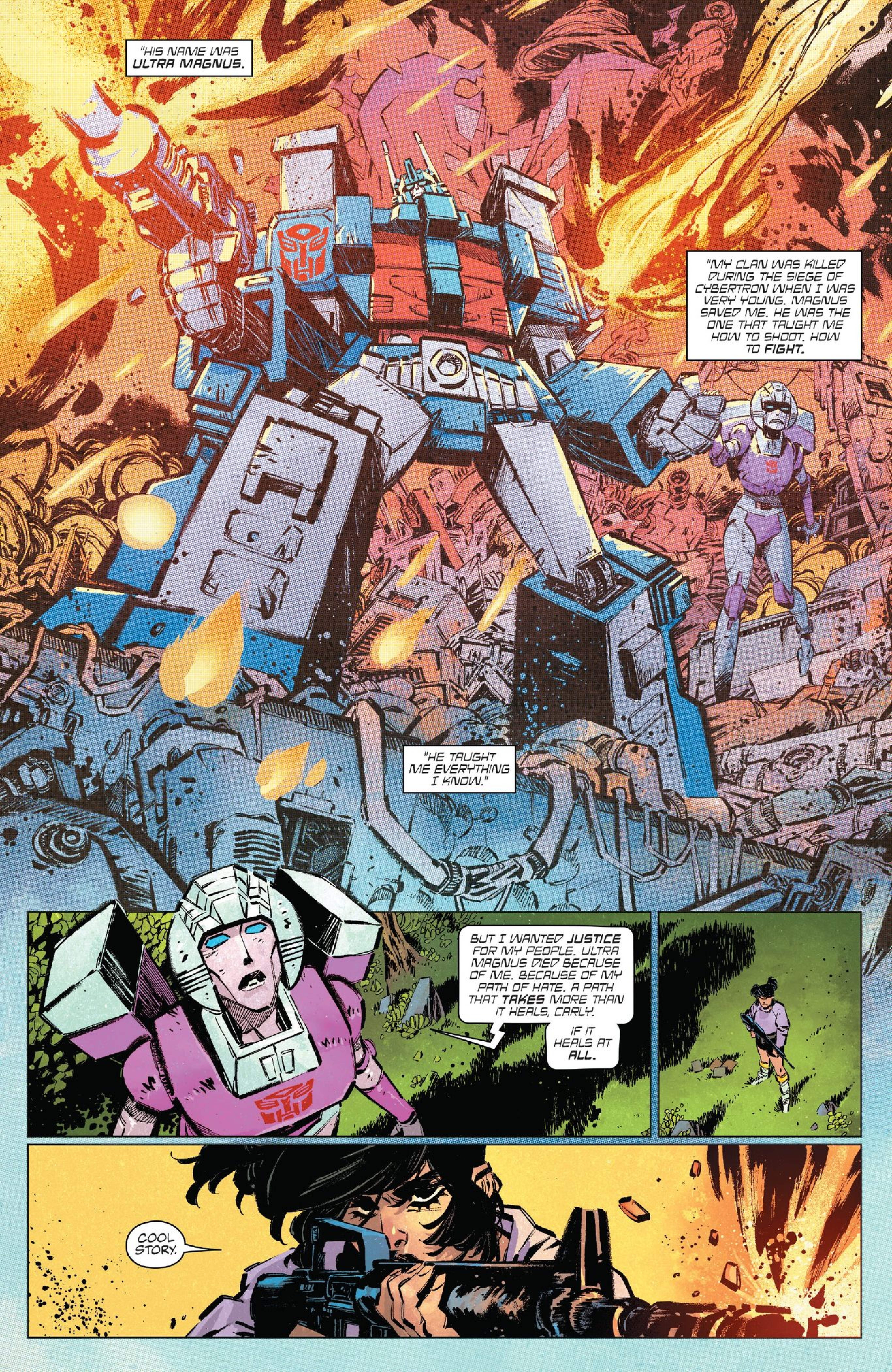

HERE, LASERBEAK.
SKRAWWW!
SOUNDWAVE!
I AM WILLING TO FORGIVE THIS BETRAYAL!!!
YOU CAN STILL CHOOSE...THE **RIGHT** PATH FOR OUR SPECIES-- YOU CAN--
YOU KICKED MY RAVAGE.

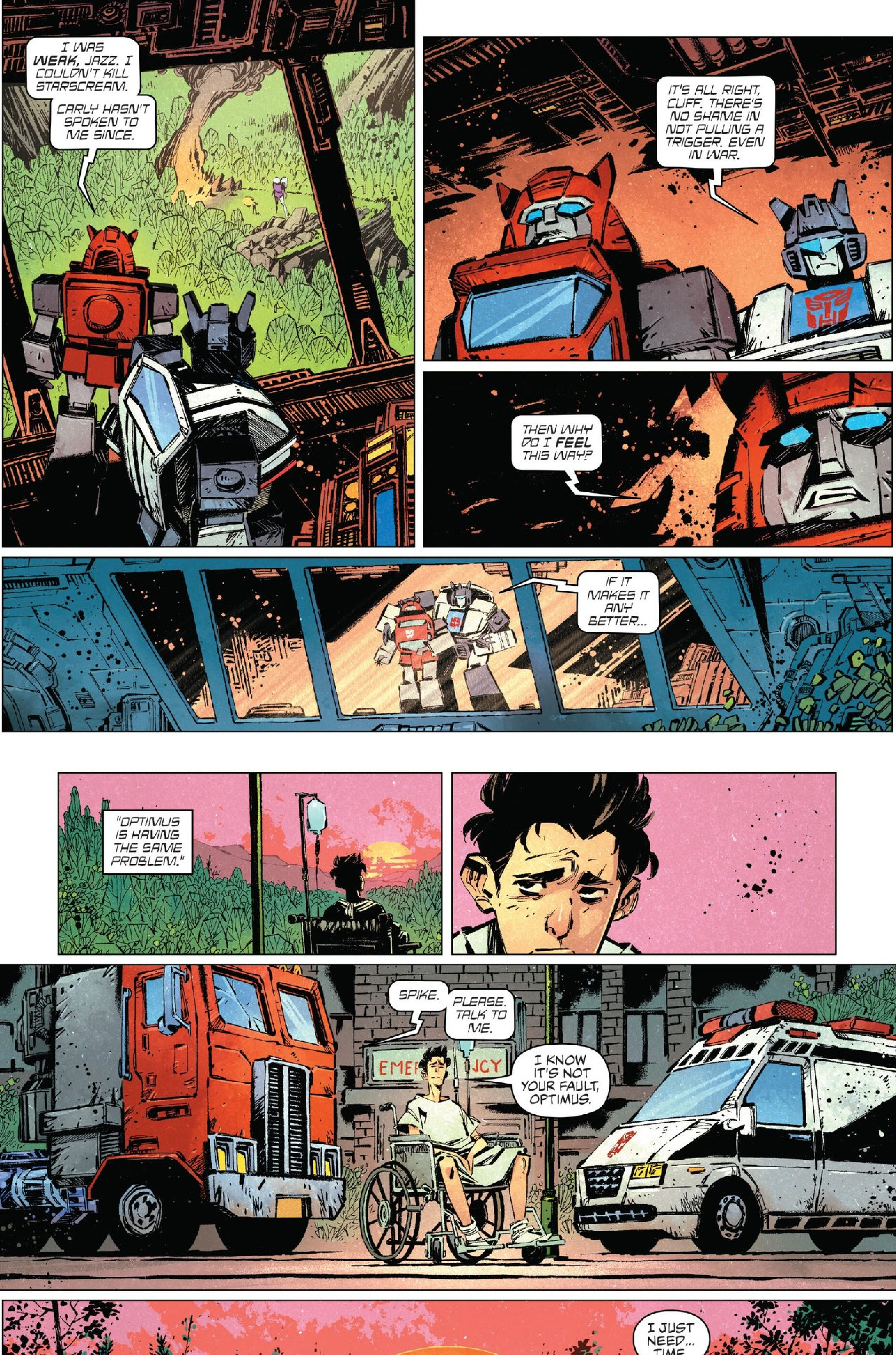

SHRAKK
RIPPPP
THE ONLY PATH LEFT IS EXTERMINATION.
HKKK--GHK-GK-NO--
GOODBYE, STARSCREAM.

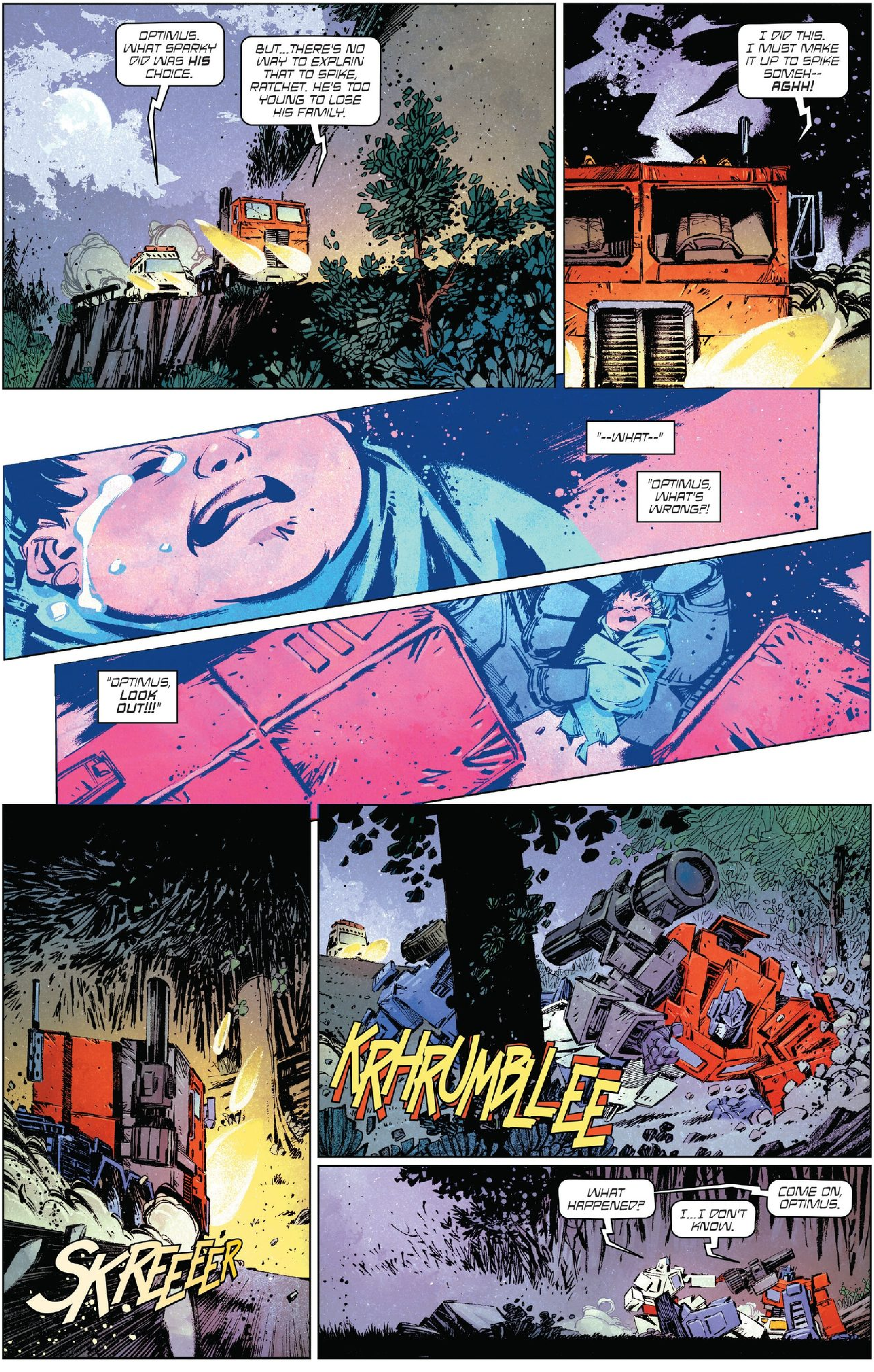

THESE PIECES...
WILL HELP HEAL RAVAGE.
BUT I WILL NOT JUST HEAL MY OWN. WE WILL REBUILD. **TOGETHER.** WE WILL CONQUER. TOGETHER.
WE WILL **DESTROY.** TOGETHER.
ARE YOU **WITH ME,** BROTHERS?
CHK
CHK
CHK
CHK
DECEPTICONS! HONOR OUR NEW LEADER!
SOUND WAVE!
SOUND WAVE!
SOUND WAVE!
SOUND WAVE!
SOUND WAVE!

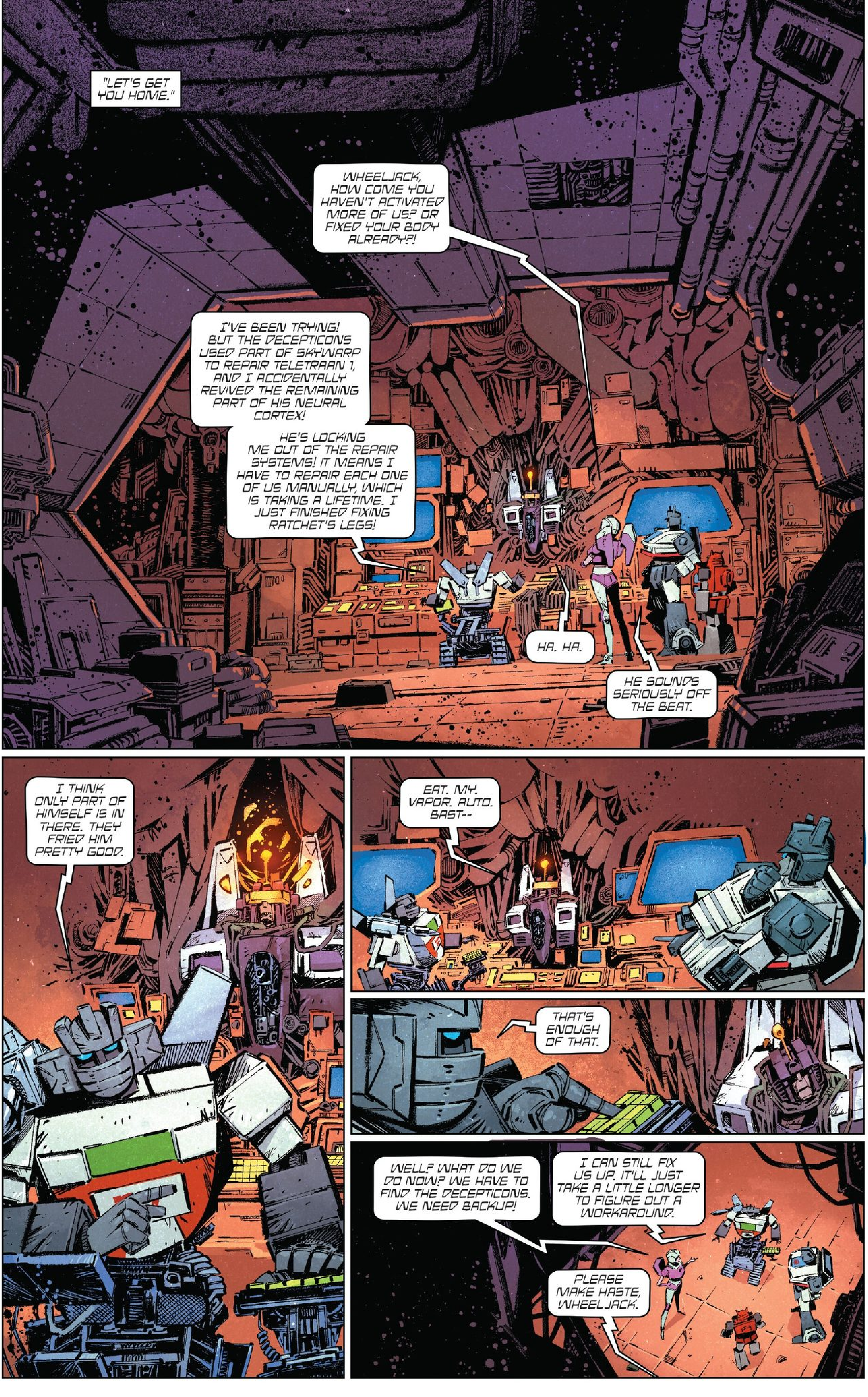

IT'S CARLY, ISN'T IT?
GUILTY.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WHAT'S IT LOOK LIKE?
TRAINING.
IS THIS SOMETHING YOU'RE USED TO? HERE ON EARTH?
NOT REALLY.
GOTTA START SOME-WHERE.
CAN I JOIN YOU?
BOOM!!
SHOOT. SORRY.
NOT BAD.

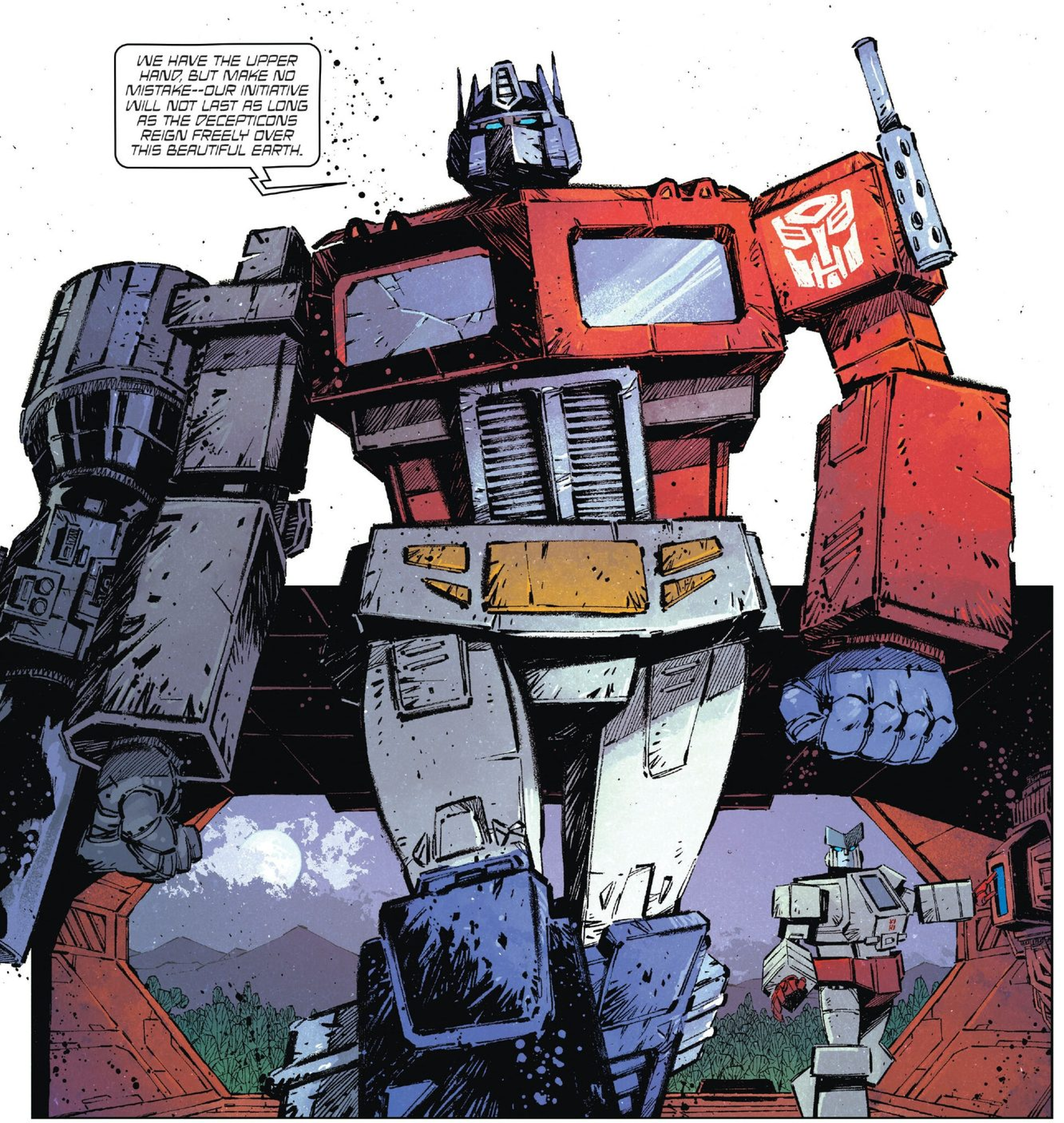

OPTIMUS SAYS I'M THE BEST SHOT HE'S EVER SEEN.
I WISH I WASN'T SO GOOD AT IT.
WHAT?! YOU SHOULD BE **STOKED!** IT'LL HELP WHEN IT COMES TO KILLING DECEPTICONS.
KILLING **STARSCREAM.**
I CAN SEE THE FIRE IN YOUR EYES. BE CAREFUL IT DOESN'T **CONSUME** YOU.
UM, I'M SORRY. YOU DON'T KNOW THE **FIRST** THING ABOUT ME-- WHAT WAS IT? ARBEE?
ARCEE.
WHATEVER.
I APOLOGIZE. IT'S JUST... YOU REMIND ME OF MYSELF, WHEN MY GEARS WERE JUST BEGINNING TO TURN. I HAD A TEACHER THEN.

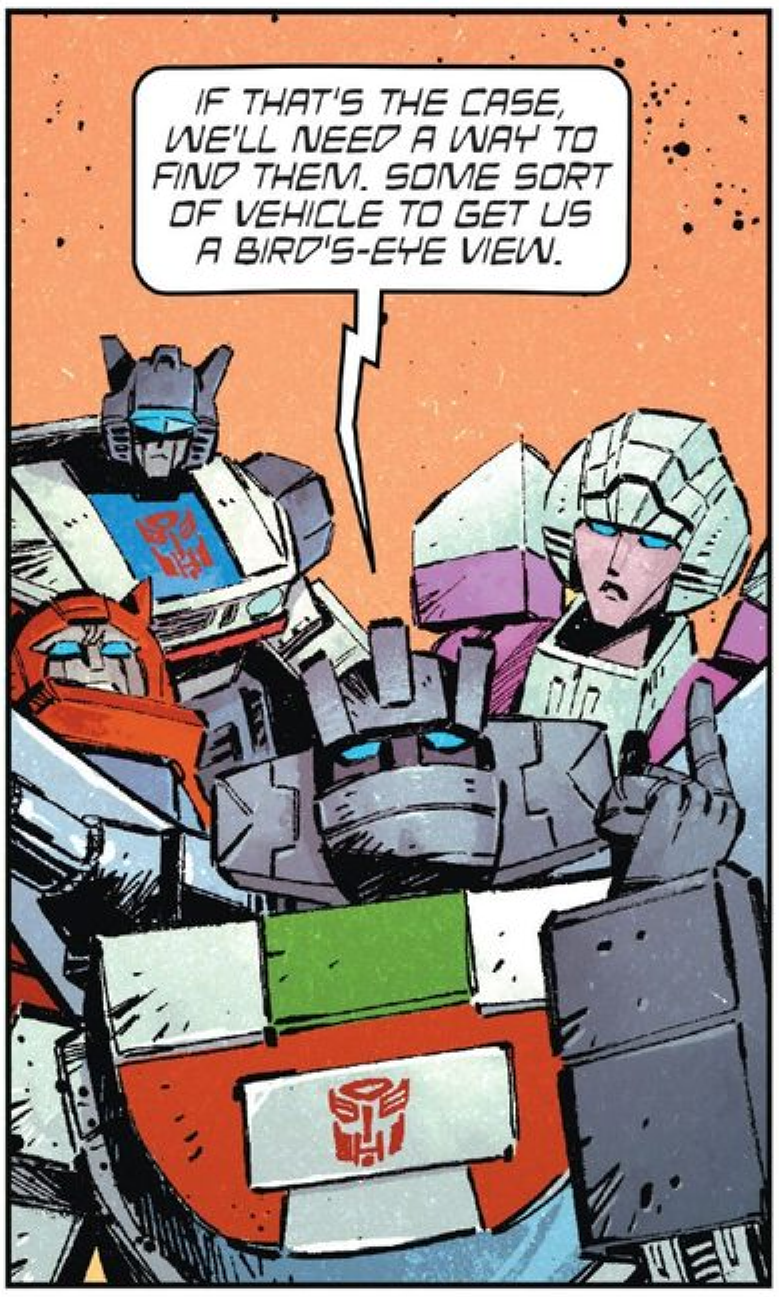

"HIS NAME WAS **ULTRA MAGNUS.**
"MY CLAN WAS KILLED DURING THE SIEGE OF CYBERTRON WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG. MAGNUS SAVED ME. HE WAS THE ONE THAT TAUGHT ME HOW TO SHOOT. HOW TO **FIGHT.**
"HE TAUGHT ME EVERYTHING I KNOW."
BUT I WANTED **JUSTICE** FOR MY PEOPLE. ULTRA MAGNUS DIED BECAUSE OF ME. BECAUSE OF MY PATH OF HATE. A PATH THAT **TAKES** MORE THAN IT HEALS, CARLY.
IF IT HEALS AT **ALL.**
COOL STORY.

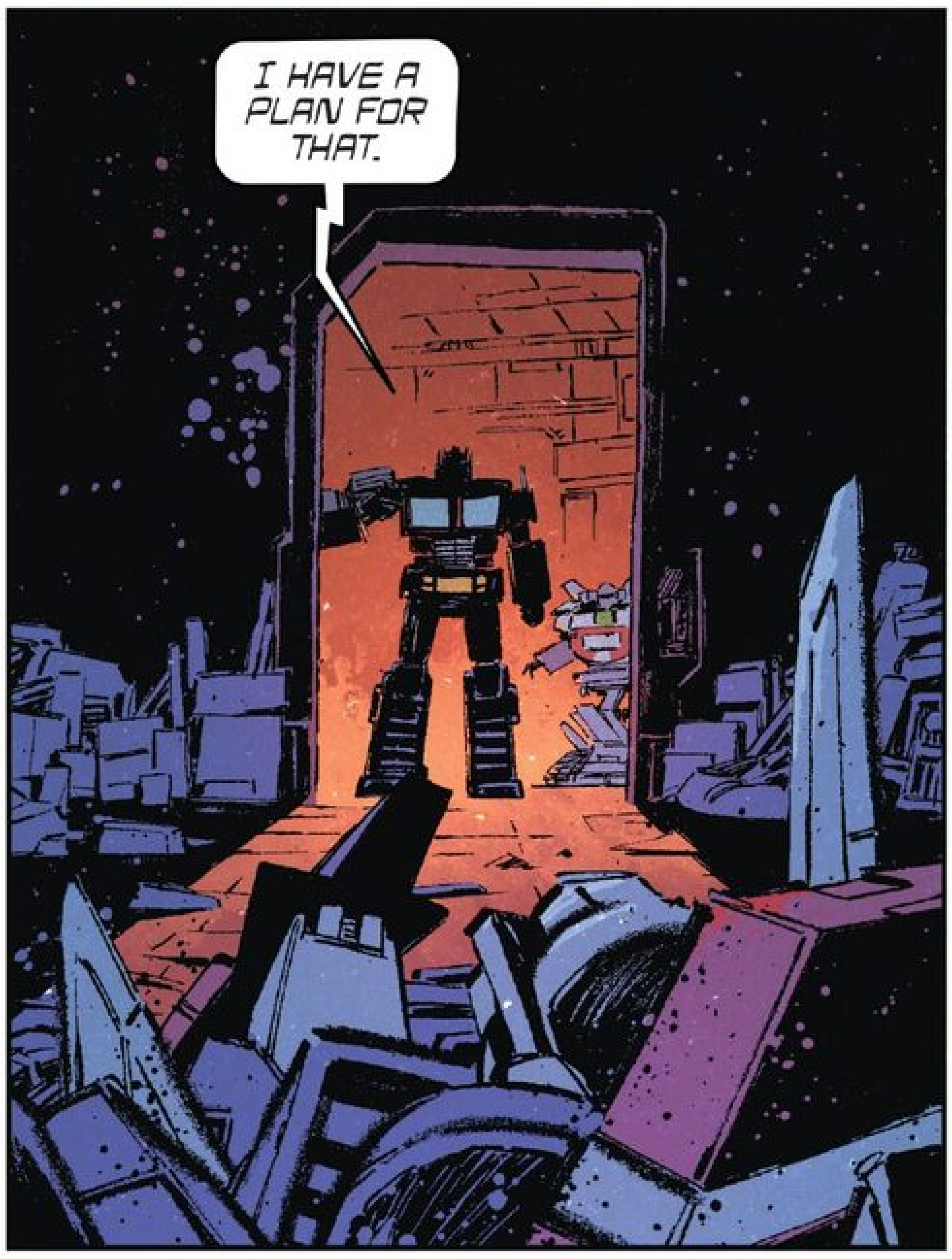

I WAS **WEAK**, JAZZ. I COULDN'T KILL STARSCREAM.
CARLY HASN'T SPOKEN TO ME SINCE.
IT'S ALL RIGHT, CLIFF. THERE'S NO SHAME IN NOT PULLING A TRIGGER. EVEN IN WAR.
THEN WHY DO I **FEEL** THIS WAY?
IF IT MAKES IT ANY BETTER...
"OPTIMUS IS HAVING THE SAME PROBLEM."
SPIKE.
PLEASE. TALK TO ME.
EMER NCY
I KNOW IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, OPTIMUS.
I JUST NEED... TIME.

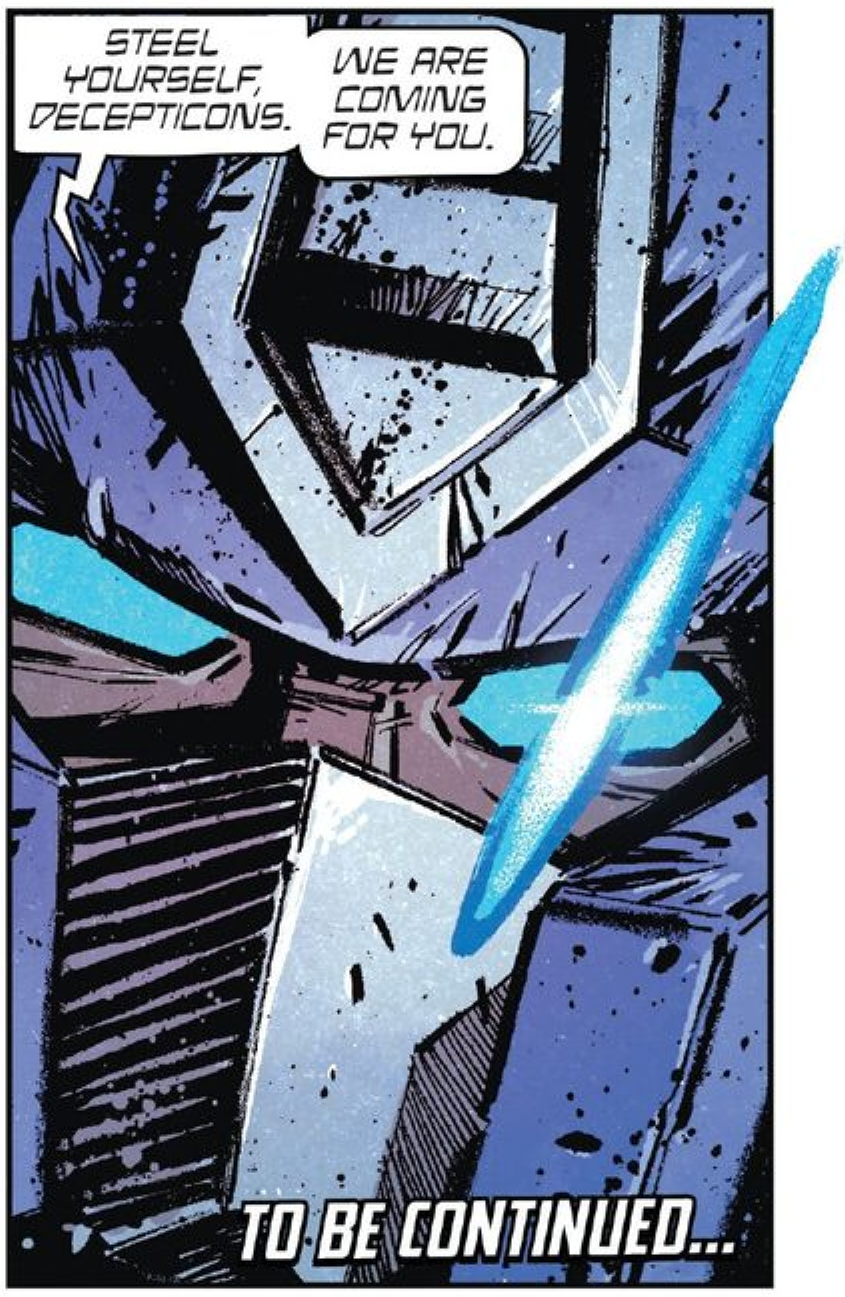

OPTIMUS. WHAT SPARKY DID WAS **HIS** CHOICE.
BUT...THERE'S NO WAY TO EXPLAIN THAT TO SPIKE, RATCHET. HE'S TOO YOUNG TO LOSE HIS FAMILY.
I DID THIS. I MUST MAKE IT UP TO SPIKE SOMEH-- **AGHH!**
"--WHAT--"
"OPTIMUS, WHAT'S WRONG?!
"OPTIMUS, **LOOK OUT!!!**"
SKREEEER
KRHRUMBLLEE
WHAT HAPPENED?
COME ON, OPTIMUS.
I...I DON'T KNOW.


"LET'S GET YOU HOME."
WHEELJACK, HOW COME YOU HAVEN'T ACTIVATED MORE OF US? OR FIXED YOUR BODY ALREADY?!
I'VE BEEN TRYING! BUT THE DECEPTICONS USED PART OF SKYWARP TO REPAIR TELETRAAN 1, AND I ACCIDENTALLY REVIVED THE REMAINING PART OF HIS NEURAL CORTEX!
HE'S LOCKING ME OUT OF THE REPAIR SYSTEMS! IT MEANS I HAVE TO REPAIR EACH ONE OF US MANUALLY, WHICH IS TAKING A LIFETIME. I JUST FINISHED FIXING RATCHET'S LEGS!
HA. HA.
HE SOUNDS SERIOUSLY OFF THE BEAT.
I THINK ONLY PART OF HIMSELF IS IN THERE. THEY FRIED HIM PRETTY GOOD.
EAT. MY. VAPOR. AUTO. BAST--
THAT'S ENOUGH OF THAT.
WELL? WHAT DO WE DO NOW? WE HAVE TO FIND THE DECEPTICONS. WE NEED BACKUP!
I CAN STILL FIX US UP. IT'LL JUST TAKE A LITTLE LONGER TO FIGURE OUT A WORKAROUND.
PLEASE MAKE HASTE, WHEELJACK.


WE HAVE THE UPPER HAND, BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE--OUR INITIATIVE WILL NOT LAST AS LONG AS THE DECEPTICONS REIGN FREELY OVER THIS BEAUTIFUL EARTH.


IF THAT'S THE CASE, WE'LL NEED A WAY TO FIND THEM. SOME SORT OF VEHICLE TO GET US A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW.


I HAVE A PLAN FOR THAT.


STEEL YOURSELF, DECEPTICONS.
WE ARE COMING FOR YOU.
TO BE CONTINUED...

SEND LETTERS TO TRANSFORMERS@SKYBOUND.COM

Welcome back everyone and holy SMOKES what a great way to kick off a new arc. If you ever had doubt about how scary Soundwave can be, you now have your answer haha!

This issue features TWO new members of the team-the amazingly talented Jorge Corona joining us on art and then your brand new editor-me! Ben Abernathy, reporting for duty and I'm so thrilled to be joining one of the absolute best books on the stands today!

Hello friends, and welcome to the team, Ben!

Now, let's just talk about this for a moment: Isn't Jorge's art INCREDIBLE? He is bringing his A-GAME to this book. I think it absolutely SLAYS and I'm so happy he's joining us. You haven't seen ANYTHING yet.

* * *

Ba weep grana weep nini bong! (if you don't get this reference, it's the universal greeting from the 1986 movie.)

Of course I get it! What kind of fan would I BE if I didn't?!

Ever since I got to see Optimus quite literally yeet Starscream, and Starscream crush a "squishy" in his fist, I have been HOOKED on this series--it is simply energon to my soul! My father was an avid watcher of the old Transformers TV series as a kid, and as a toddler I loved playing with all of his former figures--including the very Optimus figure you spoke of in the first issue! (he is missing all of his accessories as well, although soon I will have some 3D printed replicas for him.)
I was skeptical when we picked up these comics at first because I thought that you wouldn't quite capture the G1 Transformers in all their glory... but you have done them justice one-hundredfold! Seeing the original cast of characters in such a new light on these pages is just incredible, and I'm pretty sure the opening scene of issue 2 made me actually love Optimus even more than I used to. I am clinging to the scenes in which Soundwave is holding Ravage in his arms like a cat. And the art is simply stunning! What other old characters will you bring in? Perhaps the Dinobots? Arcee? Wheelie? PREDAKING?? I can't wait!

Lots of great suggestions (Dinobots!) but by now you'll know Arcee has joined the cast!

Issue 4 was incredible! Poor Skywarp... cannibalized for energon. I guess if you get desperate enough, your injured friend is fair game.

As for letter column title suggestions, I have a possible few: Transformational Texts, the Squishies' Mailbox (my personal favorite!), Teletraan 1, Laserbeak Post, and Optimist Primes. I would come up with more, but... I pretty much just emptied my entire hoard of possible names.

Well, this definitely won't be the last you guys hear from me, because this series is amazing! Keep up the great work and I hope to see Optimus kick some Decepticon butt with their own leader's arm! Or perhaps Megatron will awaken to get it back...?

Evy Beggs

Thanks for reading, Evy, and we're glad you're enjoying the series…I hope we're making your father proud! And some solid letter column name suggestions here. I think my first order of business as "the new guy" will be to nail that down!

Thanks for the kind words, Evy! Stay tuned for more Megatron (maybe!)

* * *

DWJ and team,

I live in a small town in BC, Canada and draw comics. I was out of collecting comics because things felt stale. I've followed DWJ since Murder Falcon and thought I saw his posts and thought I better jump on.

YES!

Well this new Transformers title has me excited and inspired. I wish I would have been able to get a Transformers ashcan but missed out. I had to create an account in the closest city with a comic store to pickup this title (along with longtime pickup SD, props to Erik Larsen).

I've always loved Transformers but mostly Optimus. He is the greatest hero ever. I also grew up in the 70's/80's so have a soft spot for semi trucks. Anyways, Daniel is crushing this book as he always does. I'm not sure I see the passion from any other artist bleed through the images better than him. His panel layouts and story ideas obviously excite him and us the readers. His visuals are so strong on every page.

I also picked up the GI Joe book and am excited of the possibilities of those characters making appearances here like the Duke cameo.

Just wanted to send a letter of support and letters column idea.

Cheers and keep crushing!

Scott MacDonald
Cumberland, BC, Canada

Thank you for writing, Scott! Daniel's done some pretty amazing work on this opening arc, both in story AND art. If your jaw didn't drop at least twice per issue in the opening arc, you weren't paying attention haha! And I'm excited to hear what you think of Jorge's work here on the second arc. He's insanely talented, too, and I think he's got the perfect style to follow Daniel.

Thanks so much, Scott! The only thing I can say in regards to my art is that I try to take projects that I am passionate about. And as you all know, I am damn passionate about Transformers. Things flow pretty naturally from that point, so it's a joy to make stories (and draw them!) in this world.

As a life-long Transformers fan, I've read many Transformers comics, and watched nearly all of the cartoons, and I must say that this has to be one of the best pieces of Transformers fiction I've had the pleasure of experiencing. I love how well defined the characters already are, how truly evil the Decepticons are and how heroic and selfless the Autobots are in contrast. I absolutely love the contrast between Optimus Prime and Starscream, how Starscream sees life on earth as beneath him and has no regard for it and how Optimus sees all life as precious and valuable, and is willing to make incredible sacrifices to preserve it. You've made something truly special and I cannot wait to see what's next in this series! Thank you for putting your best foot forward with this series about the giant robots that mean the world to me.

--Elijah McAmis

Before I joined the team, I, too, was enjoying the portrayal of Starscream immensely…just a great, twisted villain!

HE SHOOTS UP A HOSPITAL NUFF SAID.

Dear Transformer Central,

Congrats on an amazing start on the book. Daniel has done such an amazing job that I picked up a copy of Do A Powerbomb at my awesome local store (Memory Lane Comics in Wilmington).

I love seeing the wrestling moves. One suggestion for Daniel…We need Optimus to do a Shibata Headbutt on a Decepticon!

Take care and thanks for sharing all your gifts with us!

Jonathan Conrad

Whoa, Shibata Headbutt? I love it-what do you say, Daniel?

Jonathan, this is my pledge to you: Before I leave this title, I shall have Optimus do a Shibata style headbutt. STRONG STYLE FOREVER!!!!

Hello Skybound team,

It's my first time writing something like this to you guys, I just wanted to say when I was a kid there was no greater feeling after school than watching the original Transformers and GI Joe cartoon, and when it was announced that you guys were kickstarting the energon universe I subscribed straight away and every month I can wait to pick up the newest issue...when I read transformers #1 I was hit by a wave of nostalgia, but after the unexpected death of both Jetfire and Bumblebee I knew this wouldn't be the same transformers I grew up with, and seeing moments like Optimus do a takedown move on Starscream or beat Skywarp up with his own arm by ripping it off... only to top this issue off with Optimus wielding Megatron's fusion cannon! Let's just say whenever the newest issue comes out I clear my schedule. But only giving Transformers the praise when you do such a great job on VOID RIVALS, DUKE and COBRA COMMANDER I could really be here all day... Keep up the good work!

Thanks for bringing this Transformers fan at the forefront of something I can't wait to share with my kids

Anthony
United Kingdom

This is definitely not the same Transformers we grew up with, Anthony, but Daniel and the team have managed to synthesize what made G1 great and put their own spin on it…it's truly something special and thanks for reading! We really appreciate it!

Anthony, it's good to know that even from across the Atlantic, there were people just like me running home from school to catch the Transformers G1 show on the TV. I would beg my mom to help me record every episode on a VHS so I could try to pause the tape every time Optimus was on screen, just so I could draw him better. I guess you could say I started working on the Energon Universe at an early age!

Hey ya'll!

This series is the first where I've been able to follow along in real time and it has been such a delight picking up a copy each release day! Every issue brings with it familiar favorites from the franchise, while still feeling fresh as we get to see this version of the characters and their world emerge and grow.

I'm loving the characterizations overall and this gentle hearted Optimus really resonates with me. I'm always struck by how easy it is for my mind to automatically read his lines in Peter Cullen's voice. I'm sure I'm not the first to say it and I won't be the last, but to me the most memorable scene of the series has been Optimus and the deer. Those few panels truly encompass the spirit of our Prime and do so much to set the tone going forward. It's fantastic stuff!

AGREED. That scene with Optimus and the deer was a punch in the guy and so well executed.

I knew it was special as soon as I wrote it! I'm gonna take a victory lap on this one! I'm so happy that scene made it into the book!

Another highlight of the series has been Cliffjumper! I've always had a soft spot for him and considering he's been overlooked so often in recent Transformers media, it's seriously refreshing getting to see him as part of the main cast. I look forward to seeing how Cliff and Carly's dynamic develops in the future and can't wait for all the exciting events you have in store for us!

Sincerely,
Tag

Thanks for reading the series, Tag, and taking the time to write in. I agree, a highlight for me as a fan has been the use of Cliffjumper in the series and his development. I'm curious, Daniel, were you a big Cliffjumper fan before launching the series? Was this a dream come true?

You know, I was pretty ambivalent on Cliff when I started writing this, but I knew I wanted to deviate from the "usual" take of TF by eliminating Bumblebee early. I still wanted someone small and spunky in the cast, and Cliff fit the bill perfectly. He's been so fun to write and hopefully he doesn't die in 30 days! WHAT??? SEE YOU NEXT MONTH!!!

-DWJ

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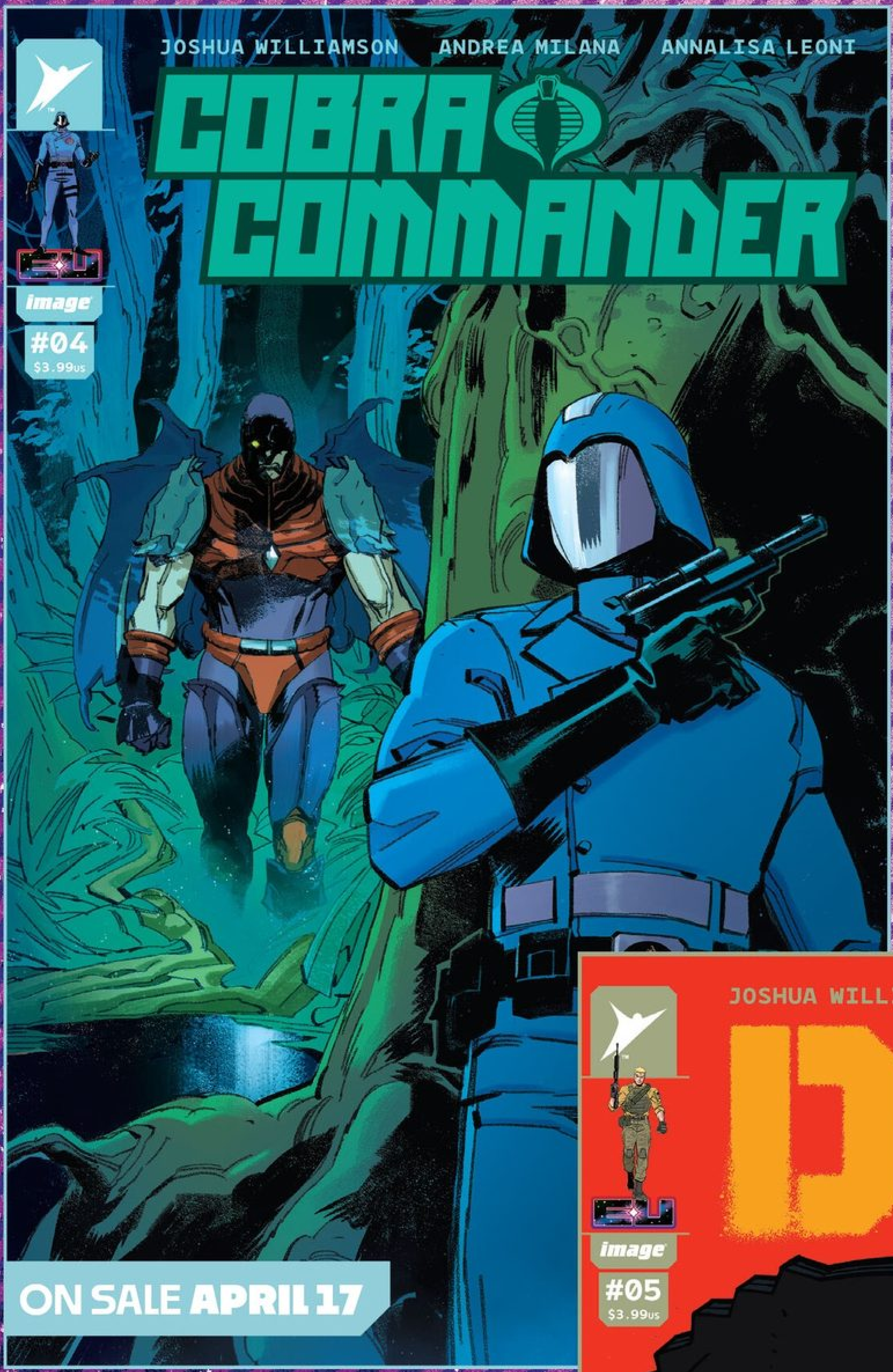
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